

William Charles Cole Claiborne to Andrew Jackson, September 19, 1814, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

GOVERNOR CLAIBORNE TO JACKSON.

New Orleans, September 19, 1814.

Sir, We have *inofficial information* , but nevertheless such as may be relied on, that the expedition against the Pirates and smugglers of Barataria,¹ had so far succeeded as to drive them from their position at Grand Terre, and to acquire possession of most of their ill begotten treasure; Indeed many of the fugitives have reached this city, but their statements are so contradictory, that I cannot undertake to give you the particulars. I greatly fear however, that the Gun Boats may be much exposed in regaining their station on the lakes; But by Keeping in shoal water I hope they may evade the Enemy, and at least enter the Mississippi by the south west pass. We have heard sir, of an attack on the point of Mobile. It is added and I trust in God it may be true, that the Enemy has been beaten off, and that from your present force and state of preparation, you have nothing to fear; I am not however without great apprehensions for the safety of this city; In the absence of the Gun Boats, the lakes are open to the Enemy, and I am exerting all my means to guard against a surprise. The Detached Militia from the first Brigade, to the amount of about one hundred and twenty are now on duty in this city under the orders of Colo. McRea. The men drawn from the second Brigade, will rendezvous here on the 24th Instant, and the six hundred men, ordered from the second Division will certainly be at Baton Rouge early in October. The only difficulty I have hitherto experienced in meeting the requisition, has been in this city, and exclusively from some European Frenchman, who after giving their adhesion to Louis 18th have thro' the French consul claimed exemption from the Draft as French subjects.² The question of exemption however, is now

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under discussion before a special court of Enquiry, and I am not without hopes that these ungrateful men may yet be brought to a discharge of their duties. The body of the

1 This expedition sailed from New Orleans on September 13. Grande Terre was an island at the mouth of Baratavia Bay, on which the freebooters had their establishment.

2 The following paper is one of the certificates issued at this time by the French consul in New Orleans:

“ *Consulat de France a la Nouvelle Orlèans*. Nous Anne Louis de Tousard Chevalier de l'Ordre royal et militaire de St. Louis, Ancien Lieutenant Colonel du Règiment du Cap français; Vice Consul de France, Consul par Intèrim à la Nouvelle Orlèans: faisant droit à la reclamation qui nous a été faite par Mr. Jean André William Pourçine, que malgré ses représentations et son refus, on aurait tiré au sort pour lui, et qu'il était désigné pour être enrollé dans le service des Etats unis;

“Considérant que sous la loi de la milice des Etats unis, et celle de l'Etat de la Louisiane, aucun alien ne peut être enrollé dans la Milice.

“ *Certifions* que le dit Mr. Pourcine est né à Jérémie, Isle St Domingue; qu'il est Alien, et sujet de Sa Majesté tres chrétienne; qu'il est immatriculé et reconnu comme tel en ce Consulat; qu'il est à notre connaissance qu'il n'a point été naturalisé Citoyen des Etats Unis et qu'il n'a exercé aucun des Droits qui eussent pu le faire considéré comme tel, et compromettre son titre de sujet français; qu'en conséquence, on ne peut sans violer les Loix des Etats Unis, celles de l'Etat de la Louisiane, et les Droits du Gouvernement francais, soustraire un Sujet francais à son souverain légitime en le pressant et en l'enrollant de force au service des Etats Unis. En témoignage de quoi nous lui avons délivré le présent Certificat, que nous avons signé, et fait sceller du sceau de nos armes, (celui de S. M. T. C. ne nous étant pas encore parvenu) pour lui servir ce que de droit.

“A la Nouvelle Orléans le 17 Sept'bre 1814.”

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city Militia begin to manifest a proper feeling and conduct; They perform with cheerfulness patrol duty at night, and one company detailed every day and relieved at 8 o'clock A. M. mounts guard daily at the Powder magazine on the opposite shore. I have taken means to require information daily from the Pass au chef Menteur, as also from the various passes in the vicinity of Terre aux Boeuf. But I am vastly solicitous about the pass of Barataria; Excuse me my Dear sir for suggesting the expediency of your directing immediate possession to be taken of Grand Terre, the spot from which the Pirates were recently expelled, and of occupying the place called the temple which I so particularly noticed in my communications by Colo Schaumburg.³ If the Enemy should possess himself of Grand terre, it will be vastly difficult to dislodge him, and he may, and no doubt will be daily reinforced by fugitives slaves

3 Maj. Bartholomew Schaumburg; see vol. I., pp. 274, 282.

I am sir,